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COMPLETENESS IN LITERARY ART  
ILLUSTRATED FROM SHAKES-  
PEARE AND MILTON.

Completeness in a work of art is the expressed fulness that belongs to it. It is a fulness which, because it is expressed, is so concentrating as to shut out all that is even suggestively irrelevant. It is a virtue and not a grace; all the graces without it are inadequate to produce a work of fine art.

EMERSON in writing of 'SHAKESPEARE the Poet,' says "An omnipresent humanity co-ordinates all his faculties." Then, it is true that completeness requires the co-ordination of faculties. EMERSON further says of any other compared with SHAKESPEARE, "He crams this part and starves that other part, consulting not the fitness of the thing, but his fitness and strength." But with SHAKESPEARE "all is duly given. . . the great he tells greatly; the small subordinately. He is wise without emphasis or assertion; he is strong, as nature is strong, who lifts the land into mountain slopes without effort and by the same rule as she floats a bubble in the air, and likes as well to do the one as the other."

My purpose is to measure MILTON by SHAKESPEARE, in a single instance, as to the virtue of completeness. Each describes a battle in the air.

In "Julius Cæsar" Calpurnia, in trying to dissuade Cæsar from going to the Capitol, recounts some most horrid sights seen by the watch. One of these is,

"Fierce fiery warriors fought upon the clouds,  
In ranks and squadrons and right form of war,  
Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol;  
The noise of battle hurtled in the air,  
Horses did neigh, and dying men did groan."

Strike out the line, "Which drizzled blood upon the Capitol," and count how much is lost; just so much has MILTON failed to put in. A fight of fierce fiery warriors, with groans of dying men, surely calls for mention of blood, —how meaningful in this case is "drizzled!"

Raphael relates the conflict between the powers of good and evil on the plains of Heaven. In telling the hand-to-hand combat of Michael with Satan, how Michael's "grinding sword with discontinuous wound passed through him," he says:

—"but the ethereal substance closed,  
Not long divisible, and from the gash  
A stream of nectarous humour issuing flowed  
Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed."

This is the only blood mentioned, and here there is just enough to stain Satan's armor. Let this suffice to show that MILTON's celestial creatures could bleed, and sanguinely too.

Then, all the plain was

"Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,"  
of these veined creatures:

"On they move  
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,  
Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides  
Their perfect ranks."

The two hosts

"front to front  
Presented stood in terrible array  
Of hideous length."

Anon,

"Arms on armour clashing brayed  
Horrible discord, —————  
So under fiery cope together rushed  
Both battles main, with ruinous assault  
And inextinguishable rage. All Heaven  
Resounded, and had earth been then, all earth  
Had to her centre shook."

Why not deluged in blood too, for Michael's sword "felled squadrons at once?"

Who does not expect to see, and almost to smell, real red blood in a situation so human as,

"All the ground  
With shivered armour strown, and on a heap  
Chariot and charioteer lay overturned,  
And fiery foaming steeds!"

The Satanic hosts, not dismayed, determine to come again—this time with powder and cannon.

"From those deepthroated engines belched,  
—————disgorging foul  
Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail  
Of iron globes."

The victor hosts fell by thousands, angel on archangel rolled.—No blood!

Recovering from their discomfiture, Messiah's mighty angels plucked the seated hills, and whelmed the cursed engines, and flung main promontories on their heads,

"Which wrought them pain  
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,"

—but no rivers of blood, no, not enough to stain their armor!

The marshalling the hosts for battle is not to be considered, inasmuch as SHAKESPEARE begins his description beyond that point.

What SHAKESPEARE does, is done, it seems, incidentally—the more art for that; but what MILTON does, is done prepense.

SHAKESPEARE'S warriors fight "upon the clouds;" and because blood must come in such a strife, see how "drizzling" blood fits with the idea in "clouds" (and their height) as their standing ground.

MILTON'S combatants meet on the fields of Heaven where are hills and dales, and streams and woods—"Earth hath this variety from Heaven;" but there is no blood to flood the vales, and rush, mad, to the seas.

In SHAKESPEARE the blood drizzled *upon the Capitol*. How significant!

MILTON describes a battle that was as portentous to Man as that other was to Cæsar; and having conjectured earth to "be but the shadow of Heaven and things therein each to other like," there was no artistic difficulty in connecting blood (of angels!) with the earth to great effect; for recall how he helped the description of the shock and noise of the first onset by saying,

"And had earth been then, all earth  
Had to her centre shook."

So MILTON, with a grander theme and the materials in his hands, lacking completeness, falls fathoms below SHAKESPEARE as an artist.

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#### MOLBECH'S REFERENCES TO CO- DEX REGIUS 1586. (1488).

Among the many references to Codex Regius 1586 occurring in MOLBECH'S 'Glossarium,' those cited below show slight variations from the MS. The Codex, which is described in C. J. BRANDT'S 'Gammeldansk Læsebog' p. 228, is lodged in the Royal Library at Copenhagen, and is of special value as showing the state of the Danish language immediately before the Reformation. MOLBECH'S reference is, in each case, given first and is followed by the correct reading. None of the references occur in 'Kalkar's Ordbog.' As will be seen, many of

the variations occur not in the words cited but in other portions of the quotations.

ADVAGT. "Ther iek meth al idh oc atwackth studerede i Tullio." "Ther iek om daggen met all idh oc atwackth studerethe i tullio."

ATTRAAELIG. fol. 158, b. fol. 106, b. An impossibility, as the Codex consists of only 155 fols.

FORVIDELSE. "Mik til forwydelsæ,"  
"Mik till forwydelsæ." fol. 106, b.

NEDERMERE. "Nedhermere,"  
"Nedhermeræ."

SENGEDEIE. "Een dag kom till sanctam Katarinam een mæktugh prelathe sænghede." "Een dagh kom till sanctam katarinam . . . een megtugh prelathe sænghedeyæ."

SIGELSE. "Eendeles af thromæntz sighelsæ." "Eendeles aff thromæntz sighelsæ."

VANFREID. "Swa wæll meth wanfreyd." "Swa wæll met wanfredh." fol. 106, b.

VEDERTØRFT. "Redher wore gæsther madh oc theres wedhertøfft." "Redher ware gæsther madh oc theris wedhertørffth."

VÆRDSKYLDELIG. "Wærdskyllelighe gern-inghæ,"  
"Wærdskyllelighe gærninghæ."

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*Englische Metrik* von DR. J. SCHIPPER.  
Zweiter Theil: Neuenglische Metrik.  
Bonn: Emil Strauss. 1888-89. 8vo, pp. xvi, 1064.

Counting the first part of this work, published seven years ago, but leaving out the admirable index at the end of the present volume, we have fifteen hundred pages devoted to the scientific and historical study of English Metres. For our modern poetry alone we have nearly a thousand pages, and half of this space is given to a remarkably thorough study of the stanza.

It is no detraction to say of SCHIPPER'S